

Cable  
Text:

S E C R E T ANKARA 00398

SIPDIS

CX:

ACTION: PMA

INFO: ECON TSR FCS CONS AMB POL DCM DAO RAO PA

DISSEMINATION: PMA /1

CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: A/DCM:KDEBLAUW

DRAFTED: PMA:BKLEIMAN

CLEARED: ODC:RR DAO:CS, PD:EM/KS POL:JW PMA:CS

VZCZCAYI852

OO RUEHC RUEHGB RHMFISS RHMFISS RHMFISS RHMFISS

RUFOADA RUEKJCS RHEHAAA RUEUITH RUEKJCS RUEHAK

DE RUEHAK #0398 0601146

ZNY SSSSS ZZH

O 291146Z FEB 08

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5419

INFO RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE 1141

RHMFISS/39ABG CP INCIRLIK AB TU IMMEDIATE

RHMFISS/425ABG IZMIR TU//CC// IMMEDIATE

RHMFISS/EUCOM POLAD VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE

RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE

RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK IMMEDIATE

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J-3/J-5// IMMEDIATE

RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU//TCH// IMMEDIATE

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//USDP:PDUSDP/ISA:EUR/ISA:NESA/DSCA//

RUEHAK/USDAO ANKARA TU IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T ANKARA 000398

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/29/2028

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [PTER](#) [TU](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: TURKEY/IRAQ SITREP 8: DAY 7 OF GROUND OPERATIONS

REF: A. ANKARA 0376 AND PREVIOUS

[1](#)B. ANKARA 0389

Classified By: A/DCM Kim DeBlauw for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

[1](#)1. (S//REL TO USA, GBR) Although we have received no formal TGS notification, elements of the Turkish forces involved in the cross-border operation in northern Iraq appear to have begun withdrawing from their forward operating bases. Turkish air force and artillery units conducted cross-border CAS and fire missions the afternoon of 28 February likely in support of redeployment operations. Elements of the Turkish 1st Jandarma Commando Brigade, and elements of either the 5th Battalion of the Mountain Commando Brigade of the 3rd Battalion of the 3rd Commando Brigade departed the morning of 28 February according to sensitive intelligence and imagery. Turkey continues to conduct air strikes and probably will conduct artillery strikes against KGK locations inside the operating area of the Eastern Zap region. Indications of a withdrawal were observed yesterday with continued movement overnight and throughout this morning (29 Feb). Ankara Coordination Directorate observations, along with reports from TGS liaison officers, support the above analysis.

[1](#)2. (U) A Turkish General Staff (TGS) statement on February 28 reported 7 terrorists were killed on the 7th day of the CBO, bringing the total to 237. TGS said their personnel have not been affected by the weather conditions and targets continued

to be struck. TGS also said reports that Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) are destroying civilian infrastructure in northern Iraq are false and that only primitive infrastructure used by the PKK has been destroyed.

¶3. (U) All press outlets reported on the February 28 visit of Defense Secretary Gates, who met with MOD Gonul, CHOD Gen. Buyukanit, PM Erdogan, and President Gul. Media reported that Gates expressed the U.S. position that the CBO should be as short as possible. The English language daily Anatolia noted Gates also stressed the need for non-military initiatives and quoted Gates as telling Gonul, "This is the only way to isolate terrorists from the population and provide a long term solution to the problem." The paper noted that Gates refuted speculation the U.S. would cut intelligence support in response to a prolonged CBO. Commentators wrote that when Gates told Turkish officials the CBO should be short, his interlocutors responded the operations would last until their goals are met, with Gen. Buyukanit quoted as saying later, "A short time is a relative notion. It is sometimes a day, sometimes a year."

¶4. (U) Turkish press continues to report on operations in northern Iraq. Islamist-oriented Zaman reported the army plans to establish 11 temporary bases in northern Iraq after the majority of troops are pulled out. The paper also quoted Kurdish regional government PM Barzani as saying, "We're not convinced whether these attacks are truly against the PKK or if they are actually against the Kurdistan region of Iraq." Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet claims intelligence sharing between the U.S. and TAF has dramatically decreased since the CBO began, adding the need for such intelligence diminished after the U.S. opened Iraqi airspace to Turkish jets. Press outlets continued to report PKK terrorists in the Zap region are besieged by Turkish troops. Zaman added TAF have destroyed the Loran PKK Camp in Hakurk, noting PKK militants in that area are reportedly joining with the PJAK, a PKK-affiliate group based in Iran. Islamist-oriented Haber 7 noted the PKK has started to use YouTube to disseminate propaganda videos. Commentators continued to discuss the importance of non-military solutions to the Kurdish issue.

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